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NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS



IN CHARGE OF

ELISABETH ROBINSON SCOVIL

THE BABY'S CRY.—Dr. George F. Butler, in the *New York Medical Journal*, discusses the interpretation of the baby's cry. The cry of discomfort is a pitiful wail, not as feeble as the cry of fretfulness, nor as strong as that of pain. The cry of hunger sounds much like the cry of discomfort, with an added tone of impatience. The cry of fretfulness is weak, plaintive, sometimes nasal in quality, and indicates general ill feeling without actual pain. The cry of pain is loud and vigorous, and in children over three months old is accompanied with tears. When a child cries out sharply and stops quickly, producing suppressed or choked cries, one should think of pleurisy as a possible cause of the symptoms.

PERSISTENT VOMITING OF PREGNANCY.—E. W. Johnson, in the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, reports one case. In one pregnancy all nourishment by mouth was stopped and every two hours a minim of iodine and creosote were dropped on the tongue. In a second pregnancy in the same patient five grains of thyroid extract were given subcutaneously every eight hours. Relief followed in both instances.

CHAMOIS SKIN AS A PREVENTIVE OF BED-SORES.—*The Interstate Medical Journal*, quoting from a French contemporary, says: Chamois skin, so called, is merely sheep skin treated in a certain fashion. Morichau-Beauchant has found it useful both in the prevention and treatment of bed-sores. It is applied with its softer side to the area of skin affected or threatened, and acts as a better protection than bed-rings or other paraphernalia with the exception of the water-bed. The latter, however, is not only expensive, but unendurable to many patients. If a large piece is used, the patient can conveniently be lifted by it.

ELECTRIC TREATMENT OF PROSTATIC OBSTRUCTION.—*The Medical Record*, quoting from *The Lancet*, says: J. S. Bolton describes his method of relieving the symptoms of prostatic obstruction by the passing of an electrode into the rectum and administering high-frequency currents. This treatment may make the patient comfortable, may remove the necessity for catheter interference, and restore his hope for the future.

EHRLICH'S 606 AT THE WEST SIDE GERMAN DISPENSARY.—The *New York Medical Journal* has the following: Dr. Abraham L. Wolbarst announces that, in view of the widespread interest in Ehrlich's 606, he is willing to extend the courtesy of the supply of this remedy which was given to him by Professor Ehrlich to any deserving patient in whose case it might be of special value. A clinical study of 606 is being conducted at the West Side German Dispensary, 328 West Forty-second Street, and the People's Hospital, 203 Second Avenue.

RECTAL AND AXILLARY TEMPERATURES IN DISEASE.—The *Interstate Medical Journal*, quoting from a German contemporary, says: The writer's conclusions are based upon 9000 measurements of rectal and axillary temperatures in 2200 individuals. Normally the difference between these temperatures ranges from 0.5° to 1.0° F. In cases of cardiac insufficiency the passive congestion of the more dependent parts increases this difference to from 1.5° to 2.5° F. When the difference is high, in cases of infectious disease, the phenomenon is due to an impaired myocardium. It was most frequently found in influenza, very rarely, however, in scarlet fever. The author concludes from the latter observation that the toxin of scarlatina is a nerve rather than a heart poison. In abdominal disease, an abnormally great difference between the two temperatures occurs, above all in diffuse peritonitis, being often over 3.5° F. It is an early sign in appendicitis and is useful in distinguishing between intestinal obstruction and simple constipation. In uterine affections the difference is usually normal except in uterine hemorrhage, where it may be excessive. In nervous affections, such as epilepsy, neuroses, neuralgias, migraine, and the like, the axillary temperatures are sometimes found higher than the rectal.

HOW SHOULD HEREDITARY SYPHILIS BE TREATED.—The *Medical Record*, in a synopsis of a paper in a French medical journal, says: Gaucher states that all children of syphilitic parents, although showing no symptoms at birth, are nevertheless infected. The Wassermann reaction has been positive in cases of children of a mother infected during the eighth month of pregnancy. There are two important points in the treatment of these little patients. The first is the feeding. It is doubly important to them to have breast milk, since they need the best of food to give them the necessary strength to resist the disease, and they also obtain from the milk of the infected mother antitoxins that are of value against the disease. It is equally important not to give them to a wet nurse on account of the danger to her of infection. The second

point in the treatment is to give mercury by mouth, the sublimate being used in a solution of 1-1000, beginning with a milligramme at a dose, and increasing. The effect of the drug is better if fractional doses are used. The author condemns the use of frictions as uncleanly and uncertain, and thinks that the hypodermic use of the drug is unnecessary.

DANGEROUS PROPRIETARY OIL.—The *New York Medical Journal* says: One of the most delectable compounds exhibited at the food show was a proprietary "oil" that contained in the fluid ounce two-thirds of a grain of opium, seven minims of sulphuric ether, and nine minims of chloroform, together with ninety-three per cent. of alcohol. It is intended for pain, external or internal, and should certainly control that symptom. This "oil" would appeal strongly to a dissipated Indian, and once he incurred the habit of drinking it, great difficulty would be experienced in satisfying his peculiar craving without knowledge of the foregoing formula.

PUBLIC DRINKING CUPS BARRED.—On October 1 the regulation of the Massachusetts State Board of Health forbidding the use of public drinking cups went into effect in Boston. Under the new rules no such cup can be used in any public park, street, or way; in any building or premises used as a public hotel, theatre, public hall, or public school; in any railroad car or station, steam or ferry boat. In many places the sanitary bubbling fountains have been installed.

LITERATURE OF INTEREST TO NURSES

New York Medical Journal, October 1, "The Modern Brown Bread Bill," J. John Buzzell, M.D.; October 8, "Alcohol and its Relation to Legal Medicine," Moses Keschner, M.D.; October 15, "Carbolic Acid Poisoning," Charles B. Burke, M.D. *Medical Record*, October 1, "Street Dust as a Factor in Spreading Disease," James M. Anders, M.D.; October 8, "The Carbohydrate Diathesis," W. E. Deeks, M.D.; October 15, "Personal Observations on the Ehrlich Hata 606," Abraham L. Wolbarst, M.D.; October 22, "Constipation and Toxemia," J. George Sauer, M.D. *Interstate Medical Journal*, "The Treatment of Cancer by Radium," Louis Wickham, M.D. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, October 15, "Diet in Typhoid Fever"; October 22, "The Nutrition of the Feeble Infant," Henry Dwight Chapin, M.D.; November 5, Six articles on cancer, by Doctors Charles H. Mayo, Leo Loeb, William Allen Pusey, Joseph C. Bloodgood, F. B. Mallory, John A. Fordyce; Editorial—Gluten Flour and Diabetic Foods.